

### Red Star: Always ready to rescue animals in North Carolina and beyond

By Tracy Reis, National Director-Animal Emergency Services, American Humane Association

Whenever disaster strikes and animals are in need of help, American Humane Association's Red Star Rescue Services Team is there. This highly-trained team is one of the nation's premier animal rescue operations, and since World War I has responded to some of the biggest natural and manmade disasters both here and overseas.

In 1916, the U.S. Secretary of War officially requested that the American Humane Association assist the government in providing care for the injured cavalry horses on the battlefields of Europe. Much in the same way the Red Cross treated wounded human soldiers, Red Star was there for their four-legged counterparts.



Red Star rig full of supplies

Following the war, Red Star turned its focus domestically, and as the response to the extensive flooding of the Ohio River in 1937 proved, Red Star needed to expand its resources to be able to cope with any and all types of disasters which afflict this country.

Nearly a century after its inception, Red Star has been on the ground at some of the most trying disasters the country and world have ever seen: Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike; earthquake in Haiti; major floods in the Northwest, Midwest, and South; Ground Zero following 9/11; the catastrophic Joplin, Missouri tornado; and numerous blizzards and wildfires – in fact, the team is fresh off a deployment in Colorado, where wildfires have ravaged the state this summer. Just last year, Red Star went to coastal North Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Irene. Red Star also provided resources and support to relief agencies in Japan following last year's disastrous earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster. In the last five years alone, Red Star has rescued and cared for more than 64,000 animals.

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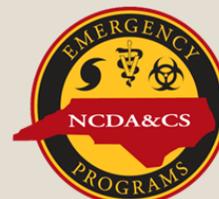


**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE &  
 CONSUMER SERVICES**

**Emergency Programs Division**

*Steve Troxler, Commissioner*

*Sharron Stewart, Director*



# Helping the Profession Prepare: The AVMA's Efforts in Disaster Preparedness

Cheryl L. Eia, JD, DVM, MPH

Assistant Director Scientific Activities Division

Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness and Response

**American Veterinary Medical Association**

Through activities ranging from advocacy on issues related to national preparedness and response policy, to training state and local animal emergency responders, and providing educational materials to practicing veterinarians and animal owners, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) is engaged in promoting disaster preparedness for all hazards and all species.

At the national level the AVMA's Committee on Disasters and Emergency Issues was established in 2001 by the AVMA Executive Board to address the veterinarian's role in emergency and disaster issues by:

- Addressing the effects of disasters on animal health, public health, and the veterinary profession;
- Contributing to the development of AVMA position statements on disaster and emergency issues affecting the veterinary profession; and
- Developing guidelines for the veterinary profession to use regarding various aspects of disaster situations.

The AVMA works with emergency preparedness and response officials from state and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations to help the nation prepare for disasters. These groups include state agencies such as state veterinarians, and state departments of agriculture and homeland security; federal agencies such as; USDA, DHS, HHS and FEMA; and national organizations such as the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs, the National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition and the American Red Cross.

For nearly 20 years, the AVMA's Veterinary Medical Response Teams (VMAT) have been engaged in preparedness and response activities across the nation. Supported through funding from the American Veterinary Medical Foundation, one of the VMAT program's key focuses is providing preparedness and response training to state veterinary medical associations, veterinary students and responder groups including MRCs, SARTs and veterinary reserve corps.

VRC COORDINATOR	UPCOMING EVENTS:	REQUIREMENTS FOR VRC DEPLOYMENT
<p><b>Mandy Tolson, DVM</b>  <b>Southeastern Region Emergency Programs Veterinarian</b>  <b>(252) 813-0989</b>  <b>Mandy.Tolson@ncagr.gov</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Please see our website for future training and activities.</b></li> <li>• <b>Check out our sheltering webinars now posted on the website!</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICS 100, 200, and 700</li> <li>• Biosecurity/PPE Training</li> <li>• Knowledge of NC Emergency Management</li> <li>• Knowledge of Emergency Support Functions</li> <li>• Attendance at VRC Meetings</li> <li>• Sign a Code of Conduct</li> </ul>
<p><b>COMPLETE YOUR VRC REGISTRATION AT <a href="http://WWW.SERVNC.ORG">WWW.SERVNC.ORG</a></b></p>		

As outreach to individual AVMA members and the general public, the AVMA provides materials on a wide range of emergency preparedness topics. The AVMA website's disaster preparedness section [www.avma.org/disaster](http://www.avma.org/disaster) contains preparedness materials including:



**Saving the Whole Family** © — a booklet outlining emergency preparedness for animal owners with information on including animals in an emergency plan, what to do when ordered to evacuate and tips on recovery. The booklet contains information for a variety of species including dogs, cats, horses, livestock, birds, reptiles, amphibians and other small animals. Available in either English or Spanish, it can be downloaded from the AVMA website. Printed copies may be purchased from the AVMA. This has also been made into a video which is available on the AVMA's YouTube channel, which can also be accessed through the NCVMA website.

**AVMA Emergency Preparedness and Response Guide** — a 400-page resource for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, emergency managers and others interested in animal emergency issues. It is available for free download on the AVMA website. Printed copies can be purchased from the AVMA.



**Disaster Preparedness for Veterinary Practices** — an online brochure outlining the essential components of an emergency plan for veterinary practices. It addresses preparedness for large and small disasters and contains vital planning information to help keep practices up and running in the face of a disaster.

**AVMA Disaster Preparedness Web Pages** — information and resources regarding to emergency preparedness issues related to veterinary practices, hurricane preparedness and other topics.

Finally, the AVMA employs a full-time Disaster and Emergency Response coordinator to work with AVMA members and other stakeholders on issues related to emergency preparedness and response.

The AVMA takes its role in promoting disaster preparedness and response seriously and is here to share its resources and expertise to assist with preparedness efforts.

**VRC MISSION:** Train and prepare professionals in the animal care community to respond to disaster events (all hazards) that affect both production and companion animals. Our members will serve as a resource for our state and the nation.

**NOTES:** To see recent news and updates, please visit the VRC website at [www.ncvrc.org](http://www.ncvrc.org). If you have questions about the VRC or would like to offer suggestions or articles for future newsletters, contact Mandy at [mandy.tolson@ncagr.gov](mailto:mandy.tolson@ncagr.gov).

# New Hanover County Pet Sheltering Drill 2012

By Kristen Skinner, New Hanover Emergency Management

The “Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act” was passed in October 2006. This national legislation requires that jurisdictions include pets in their planning efforts. New Hanover County Animal Control has assisted residents with their pets during times of emergencies for many years, but the county wanted to take a step further and provide a pet co-location shelter where people can stay in the same facility, although in separate areas, as their pets. New Hanover County Emergency Management and Animal Control have partnered for the past six years to plan for, and activate, a pet co-location shelter should the need arise. The New Hanover County co-location shelter is designed to accept up to 36 cats and 80 dogs. The Animal Services Unit shelter also takes pets once a state of emergency has been declared. At the co-location shelter, pets are identified and photographed before they are sheltered in crates that line the hallways. The pets are cared for by trained staff. Owners are allowed to visit their pets and are required to stay at the shelter.

The incident command team is led by the New Hanover County Animal Services Unit and the shelter is operated by New Hanover County staff. In the event of a Category 4 or 5 hurricane, New Hanover County would send residents inland to Johnston or Harnett County. Both counties have plans to shelter pets.

This year a Pet Co-Location Shelter Drill was held on June 21 at Trask Middle School. There were roughly 50 people in attendance, many of whom have helped staff the shelter in the past. Each year new staff is added. The drill is a wonderful opportunity to brush up on procedures and identify areas for improvement. The drill began with an overview of shelter activation and operation procedures. Then staff unloaded equipment from the two trailers the county uses to support the shelter.

Teamwork was the name of the game for this group, who worked together to set up crates and other equipment. The fun part was the role play where staff lined up with stuffed animals and pretended they were coming to register their pets at the shelter. This gave everyone an opportunity to become familiar with the forms and intake process. After all the staff had the opportunity to “work” in the shelter, the crates were broken down and loaded back into the trailers. The drill wrapped up with a hotwash where staff had the opportunity to make comments and share suggestions for improvement.



Participants were briefed at registration at the beginning of the drill.

The shelter team was reminded to have their family disaster plans in place so each staff member would be available to work at the shelter if needed. New Hanover County is fortunate to have such a strong group of dedicated employees from varied departments who work so well as a team.

# Red Star: Always ready to rescue animals in North Carolina and beyond

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Today, Red Star is positioned as the nation's leader in rescuing, providing care for, and sheltering animals in times of their greatest need. The team deploys in an 82-foot "Rescue Rig," outfitted with a mobile operating theater, the latest emergency rescue equipment and accommodations for up to 12 staff and volunteers at a time. But more than just providing immediate assistance to the animals, the Rescue Rig serves as a beacon of hope for reeling communities – hope that these pets can one day reunite with their owners and the rebuilding process can commence. Since 1877, American Humane Association has celebrated and promoted the human-animal bond, and nowhere is this stronger than when pet owners, who may have been separated from their beloved animals for days, weeks, or even months at a time, can see and hold them once again.

Disaster relief is not the only area where Red Star shines brightly. For those suffering from physical or emotional pain, animal-assisted therapy teams may provide comfort through the therapeutic power of interacting with an animal. This is hardly a new practice: in 1945 American Humane Association AAT teams helped welcome home brave GIs. This legacy continues with AAT teams visiting a number of camps for children of military families every summer.

Red Star now boasts more than 200 volunteers nationwide; each one receiving rigorous training for any type of situation Mother Nature can throw at them. These training standards are fully-endorsed by FEMA and a number of state-based rescue organizations, cementing Red Star as the gold standard outfit in this country.



American Humane Association's President and CEO, Robin Ganzert – a North Carolinian herself – has long stressed maintaining a strong tie to the Tar Heel State, and Red Star remains committed to a partnership with the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services whenever called upon. For more information about the history of Red Star, training standards, and more, please visit [www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org).

## Join Us for the 2012 One Medicine Symposium

By Kelly Jeffer, DVM and Bruce Akers, DVM; NCDA & CS

The North Carolina One Medicine Symposium is back! Join us December 5 and 6 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham for this year's One Medicine Symposium.

For the last several years, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services and the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services have hosted the annual One Medicine Symposium to educate and provide attendees with take-home tools that will improve preparedness for a natural or man-made disaster or infectious disease outbreak. The University of N.C. Gillings School of Global Public Health and the N.C. State University College of Veterinary Medicine are important contributing partners to this program. The program was not held in 2011 due to decreased funding.



Reality Bites: A One Medicine Approach to Vector-borne Diseases titled our 2010 conference and brought together more than 350 health professionals to discuss important issues. Themes from earlier years included a One Medicine Approach to: Homeland Security, Health Security, Food Defense, the Intersection of Public Health, Agriculture, and Wildlife (highlighting avian influenza), Globalization, Climate Change, and Emerging Influenzae.

Stay tuned to [www.onemedicinenc.com](http://www.onemedicinenc.com) for more information about this year's program. Registration cost is \$50 for the two-day program filled with dynamic speakers and relevant topics. Continuing education applications will be submitted to various boards for credit (see website for updates). To view agendas and presentations from previous One Medicine Symposia, visit [www.onemedicinenc.com/code/pres.htm](http://www.onemedicinenc.com/code/pres.htm).

### VRC Member Spotlight

#### Cora Tyson

My name is Cora Tyson and this is my story of how I became involved with Animals in Disasters.

In 1991, I was a shelter manager for a no-kill cat shelter in Tucson, Ariz., when I heard on the radio about a wild-fire in Texas. They were doing an interview with United Animal Nations, Emergency Animal Rescue Service, asking people to donate items for the animal victims. I called in and asked what I could do. They gave me a list of items needed, and I started collecting the items at my home. I called friends, went on my local radio station and local TV. Before I knew it, my driveway was full of donations. American Airlines contacted me and said they had an airplane going in that direction with relief items for the humans and I could load up the things for the animals also.

That point on, you could call me a disaster chaser. I would watch the news every night, call in to UAN and ask what they needed. Needless to say, they got to know me very well. I was referred to as the person that could get the stuff. Later this was called the Logistics Coordinator.

In 1993, I was invited to a volunteer workshop for UAN/EARS in Phoenix, Ariz. I was an official volunteer. I started taking all the free on-line FEMA courses, introduced myself to our local emergency manager, and created evacuation plans for the cats at the shelter I worked and our local Humane Society.

In 1995, our family moved to Greenville, N.C. My first deployment came in 1996 after Hurricane Fran. I spent two weeks in Wilmington working with the New Hanover Animal Control officers rescuing animals from the islands. It was at this time that I was appointed the Mid-Atlantic Regional Director for UAN/EARS. UAN/EARS provided large animal rescue, search and rescue, swift water rescue, animal first aid and fire safety training. In Pitt County, my emergency manager laughed at me when I tried to talk him into having a plan for the animals. In 1999, Hurricane Floyd hit. My emergency manager then told me, just take care of the animals and we will talk more after the disaster. We evacuated the local Humane Society and set up at the Life Science Building under the direction of Dr. Pryer. A team of trained UAN/EARS volunteers came and we ended up rescuing and caring for 865 animals, just from Pitt County. After Floyd, the whole state realized the importance of animals in people's lives and created the N.C. State Animal Response Team. Each county was then encouraged to create a disaster plan for animals. I assisted Pitt County and several other counties and states on the east coast in creating a plan to include the animals.

Hurricane Katrina was my last out-of-state deployment. I spent two months in Monroe, La., taking care of thousands of animals. After 24 deployments in 16 years, I retired from UAN/EARS. I am still involved locally; working with Michele Whaley, our County Animal Response Team Leader, and the state knows if needed, I'll be there.

My best advice for anyone thinking of joining their local CART, or a national group, stay up-to-date on training, always have a plan for yours, and expect to put in some long, hot hours. In the end, the smile on someone's face after being reunited with their pet or providing a shelter during a disaster is well worth it.

## **EHV-1/EHM Outbreak in North Carolina**

By Dr. Tom Ray, NCDA&CS

On Jan. 3, 2012, an NCSU-CVM equine clinician called the State Veterinarian's office to report their suspicion of a likely case of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1)/Equine Herpes Virus Myeloencephalopathy (EHM) – the neurologic manifestation of the EHV-1 virus in a horse. The admitting clinician, suspecting EHV-1/EHM from the referring veterinarian's history and presenting signs, placed the animal directly into an isolation/quarantine stall at the vet school, so that the animal did not come into contact with the general hospital population – and in fact, never came in contact with the general hospital in any manner.

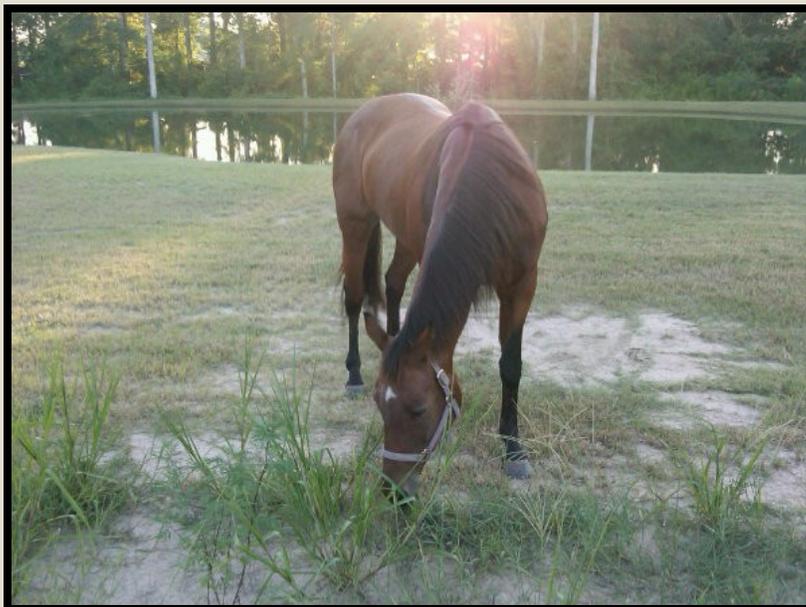
Awaiting confirmation from submitted samples, the NCSU-CVM developed protocols for handling the biosecurity of the affected horse in isolation/quarantine, handling their general, existing equine hospital population, as well as dealing with referrals that would be expected to be admitted.

At the same time, the NCDA&CS Veterinary Division tasked the field Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO) and their Animal Health Technicians (AHTs) to also visit the farm of origin to take a thorough history and establish the epidemiological links between the premises and all animal movements over the past six weeks, or two incubation periods of the virus. Following confirmation of EHV-1/EHM, tracebacks went to three other farms in North Carolina as well as into Tennessee, Virginia and South Carolina.

The North Carolina facilities were quarantined utilizing protocols developed and established in previous EHV-1/EHM outbreaks in Colorado, California and Utah. Strict biosecurity measures were put in place to quickly bring the outbreak under control and prevent the spread of the virus. These biosecurity measures included separation of the exposed horses from the non-exposed; twice daily temperature readings on all horses at the exposed facility; separate tack, feed and water buckets; and so on.

An exhaustive list of resources, both for horse and stable owners as well as for veterinary professionals was provided (see below for examples of links provided). The State Veterinarian's office issued weekly updates to stakeholders, letting those involved know how the event was being managed as the numbers of horses and quarantined facilities decreased, and the outbreak finally "burned itself out."

The horse that was in isolation quarantine at the NCSU-CVM also was strictly managed from both a biosecurity standpoint as well as medically. As the testing protocols finally showed no remaining risk of transmitting the disease, the horse was taken back to its home state where the state animal health officials continued testing protocols on that animal and the others at the home farm, and all animals were finally released from quarantine. The affected horse survived but was left with some remaining neurological deficits that the owners continue to manage successfully.



The key take-home message was that it was an extremely astute clinician who prevented the entire Vet School from being placed under quarantine and thus affecting medical needs and referrals from all over the state and region. The importance of strict biosecurity procedures – a much used phrase, though often taken for granted – was critical for preventing spread of the outbreak and bringing it under control in a relatively short period of time. The cooperation of the NCSU-CVM and their staff, the equine facilities' owners, the private practitioners involved, the state animal health officials in adjacent states with the N.C. State Veterinarian's office and NCDA&CS Veterinary Division personnel in working together to identify, control and bring this outbreak to a successful closure was key in dealing with this event. It was truly a team effort in every sense of the word.

## **EHM & EHV Resources :**

[Frequently Asked Questions about EHV/EHM for Horse Owners](#)

[EHV/EHM Brochure for Horse Owners](#)

***Website with well organized EHV-1 information:***

[University of California, Davis, School Vet Med](#) – detailed and practical information about handling sick horses, diagnostic testing, and control

[USDA EHV Resources](#)

[USDA Equine Biosecurity Brochure](#) (available in Spanish as well through *USDA/APHIS*)

[../AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary Internet Files/Content.Outlook/C3I67EX1/images/files/EquineHerpesvirusGuidelines051711.pdf](#)